

REMARKS

The present Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated February 22, 2006 in reference to the above-identified application. The Examiner set a shortened statutory period for reply of three (3) months, making the present Amendment due by May 22, 2006. Filed concurrently herewith is a request for a three-month extension of time so that the present Amendment is due by August 22, 2006.

In that Office Action, claims 1-4 and 6-40 were pending. Of these, claims 8-37 were withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention(s). Of the remaining claims, Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's allowance of claims 38 and 39. Furthermore, Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 4 and 6-7 contained allowable subject matter.

Of the remaining claims, claims 1-2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,055,948 to Kraus, et al. Claims 3 and 40 were rejected as obvious over Kraus, et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,668,555 to Moriarty under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Since the above-referenced Office Action was made "final", Applicant hereby proposes to amend this application to accept the subject matter either allowed or indicated as allowable by the Examiner. Filed concurrently herewith is a notice of appeal so that the Examiner may timely consider such amendment and, should such amendment place the application in condition for allowance, moot the Appeal.

Specifically, Applicant has rewritten dependent claim 4 in independent form as newly added claim 41. As such, claim 41 should be allowable. Applicant has amended claim 1 to incorporate the allowable subject matter from former dependent

claim 6, and dependent claim 6 has been cancelled. The dependency of claim 7 has been changed to reflect that it now depends from claim 1. Claims 2 and 3 should be allowable based upon their dependence from amended claim 1.

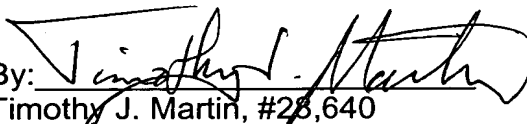
Finally, former dependent claims 4 and 6 and independent claim 40 have been cancelled by this amendment.

No additional claims fees are believed to be payable upon the Amendment. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the required fees, or to credit any overpayment, to deposit account number 13-1940.

Based on the foregoing, Applicant submits that the present application is in complete condition for allowance, and action to that end is courteously solicited. If any issues remain to be resolved prior to the granting of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney for the Applicant at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.8

I hereby certify that the foregoing **AMENDMENT (12 pages), REQUEST FOR A THREE-MONTH EXTENSION OF TIME (2 pages), CHECK NO. 19199 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$510.00, FORM PTO/SB/31 (1 page) and CHECK NO. 19200 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$250.00** is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on this 22nd day of August, 2006.

Marcie F. King
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